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Expeditionary Diplomacy:
POL-MIL Facilitation of AEF Deployments

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Title of Paper: Expeditionary Diplomacy: POL-MIL Facilitation of AEF Deployments

Author: William L. Dowdy, PhD

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Executive Summary

During the Cold War, U.S. Air Force units typically operated either from bases on American territory or from main operating bases (MOBs) in allied countries where access was assured under long-accepted arrangements. In the decade following the end of the Cold War, the number of MOBs abroad has been drastically reduced, and most remaining USAF assets have been pulled back to bases in U.S. territory.

Meanwhile, given changes in the international security environment and consequent adjustments in U.S. national security strategy, Air Force units have increasingly been required to deploy to, and operate from, forward locations in many countries outside of the Cold War alliance structure. Under the nascent Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) concept, gaining access to and maintaining positive relations with host countries are prerequisites to successful expeditionary operations.

This study was inspired by the view stated at Air University in 1999 by then-Maj Gen Donald G. Cook, first EAF Implementation Director, that "diplomatic preparation of the battlefield" is a neglected concept and enterprise that should receive more attention from EAF architects. As the first and only systematic study of "diplomatic preparation," this Research Paper selectively surveys existing and prospective USAF initiatives that attempt to come to grips with political-military ("pol-mil") challenges associated with expeditionary operations.

The author introduces the notion of "expeditionary diplomacy" as the process that both prepares the way for Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) deployments and facilitates effective operations after deployment by promoting positive host nation relations – the process that both gets us into forward operating locations (FOLs) and keeps us there as long as the mission requires.

The study then examines current Air Force-wide, major command, regional component, and school house initiatives to meet the diplomatic challenges of operating into and from numerous far-flung locations. Additional measures are recommended throughout the study to better prepare aerospace expeditionary task forces specifically, and USAF personnel in general, for the newly-salient requirement to be accomplished diplomats as well as accomplished warriors.

Finally, the author concludes with some general recommendations concerning the way ahead.

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Section 1

Introduction and Overview

The Expeditionary Air Force (EAF) concept of a primarily United States-based force with rotating Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) deployments is premised on the assumption that deploying forces will routinely be granted access to, and authorization to operate from, forward operating locations (FOLs) in host countries. To be denied that privilege in an important location or throughout a theater of operations would fundamentally undermine the strategy implicit in the EAF concept. In short, it would be a “show-stopper.” Put another way, access—to include en route overflight and landing rights and diplomatic clearance to operate from FOLs—is a prerequisite for AEF operations. Indeed, denial of access may well prove to be a more critical limiting factor than technical or logistical constraints.¹

Once achieved, access must be sustained. Access alone is not enough. Optimized, or even adequate, operability of a FOL means the absence of crippling restrictions.² Both access and operability of AEFs are enabled by diplomacy. Both are perpetuated or enhanced by diplomacy – an ongoing process of many dimensions. This study examines diplomacy as the enabling process that both prepares the way for AEF deployments and facilitates sustainment of effective operations – that both gets us in and keeps us in (and gets us out when the mission is completed). Successful diplomacy alone cannot assure successful expeditionary aerospace operations. But without it, such operations cannot succeed because they will not occur. Successful access and sustainment diplomacy is not sufficient, but it is necessary; it is a prerequisite, a threshold requirement, an enabler and facilitator.

¹ “Host nation access is the most constraining requisite for any AEF deployment,” writes Lt Col Michael J. Nowak, USAF. (*The Air Expeditionary Force: A Strategy for an Uncertain Future?* Maxwell AFB: Air University Press, The Maxwell Papers, No. 19, September 1999, p. 11.)

² In Operation Desert Fox, December 1998, more than half of the American strike aircraft at ground bases in the Persian Gulf region were kept out of the attack on Iraq because of objections of Saudi Arabia. (Douglas Jehl, *New York Times*, “U.S. Fighters in Saudi Arabia Grounded,” 19 December 1998, p. 9.) See also William L. Dowdy, *Testing the Aerospace Expeditionary Force Concept: An Analysis of AEFs I-IV (1995-97) and the Way Ahead*, Airpower Research Institute Research Paper 2000-01, Maxwell AFB, AL: College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education, 2000, pp. 22-23.

Expeditionary Diplomacy

“Expeditionary diplomacy,” as the term is used in this study, is meant to denote much more than just the narrow, stylized, formal practice of diplomats. Expeditionary diplomacy is meant to encompass the full range of engagement measures undertaken and continued by U.S. civilian and military officials – from the national command authority (NCA) level, through forward-deployed commanders, down to individual airmen – with the objective of facilitating positive and productive relations with other nations for the purpose of achieving success in expeditionary operations.

Objects and Levels of Expeditionary Diplomacy

The objects of U.S. Air Force diplomacy, thus broadly construed, are first and foremost the nation or nations hosting deployed forces, but they may also include neighbors of host nations, coalition partners, potential coalition partners, staging or transit area governments, international organizations and their agencies and officials, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Of all these objects of diplomacy, host nations are most central and essential to execution of the AEF concept of operations. Without forward basing, the USAF must resort to reliance on long-range operations with severe sortie-rate disadvantages.

U.S. diplomacy directed toward host nations must be both continuous and multi-leveled to enable and sustain AEF operations. It must be continuous in the sense that it is enmeshed in the broader, ongoing bilateral relationship that is cultivated over time in pursuit of common interests,³ and multi-leveled because it involves, from the USAF perspective: (i) military-to-military (“mil-to-mil”) relations; (ii) relations with civil authorities; and (iii) daily person-to-person relations affecting public perceptions. These respective levels of diplomatic engagement will be more or less important in a given context, but each will affect the ability of an AEF to accomplish its mission.

Traditionally, mil-to-mil relations have been a strong suit. Affinities between individuals in the profession of arms often transcend the cultural differences that tend to encumber other levels of diplomacy. Relations with local civil authorities may prove to be critical for deployed USAF commanders in matters like force protection, contracted services, and implementation of status of forces agreements (SOFA). Good public relations – fostering a favorable attitude toward deployed USAF personnel and their mission – is a key objective of American diplomacy that even the individual airman is

³ “We must...nourish our friendships, build trust and instill confidence through formal and informal agreements with other nations to ensure continued access.” (General Ralph E. Eberhart, then USAF Vice Chief of Staff, quoted by Christopher Haug, “Access Key to AEF Success,” Pacific Air Forces News Service, released 6 May 1998.)

sometimes in a position to facilitate or to frustrate. As in the practice of medicine, a fundamental objective for host-nation diplomacy is "to do no harm."⁴

Transit/staging area governments and militaries, and their civil officials and publics, are typically approached on the same multi-level basis as FOL host nations. However, on the whole, the challenge of engendering supportive actions from en route countries is likely to prove less daunting than with FOL hosts. Such countries often have had a longer experience as alliance or coalition partners.⁵ Previous relationships facilitate mutual understanding. For example, "through NATO, experienced commanders may be well versed on European cultural and political issues, but they are usually not as knowledgeable in Middle Eastern customs or on the history of developing African nations."⁶

Alliance ties offer no guarantees, however. In the punitive strike against Libya in April 1986, Operation EL DORADO CANYON, U.S. Air Force F-111s from RAF Lakenheath, England were required to fly around French and Spanish airspace because France and Spain (as well as Italy and Greece) refused overflight rights for the mission. Similarly, in the American resupply of Israel during the 1973 Middle East War, Western European nations denied access to bases and overflight rights.⁷

The diplomatic objective of doing no harm also applies to dealings with regional host-country neighbors. As American friends in the Persian Gulf have been known to remind us, they must live with their neighbors long after we have gone. Therefore, they should not be expected to automatically approve and support U.S. initiatives in the region, especially initiatives that may reasonably be predicted to rankle neighboring states. A coincidence of interests may not necessarily result in agreement on measures to be taken. Thus, the sensitivities of host-nation neighbors (of both FOL countries and en route countries) should be taken into account when undertaking AEF diplomatic initiatives. Both sets of neighbors are potential coalition partners. If badly treated, they may instead become anti-coalition antagonists.

As the proportion of USAF expeditionary operations continues to tilt toward peacetime roles (military operations other than war – MOOTW), Air Force diplomacy will increasingly have to accommodate the participation of non-state actors, principally international organizations like the United Nations, along with its many agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) of numerous types and political persuasions. Though less directly involved in actual warfare situations, such actors have the potential to be both part of the problem and part of the solution in MOOTW.

⁴ Widely reported capital crimes by U.S. servicemen in Okinawa, Korea, and Kosovo are examples of rare, isolated incidents that can nevertheless do great damage to host-country public opinion.

⁵ Moreover, they are typically more distant from the scene of action than the FOL states, thus less vulnerable to intimidation or retaliation from U.S. opponents.

⁶ Nowak, *The Air Expeditionary Force*, p. 20.

⁷ Charles M. Perry, et al., *Airpower Synergies in the New Strategic Era*, Herndon, VA: Brassey's Inc., 1997, p. 23, 65.

Study Assumptions and Objectives

To summarize, this study proceeds from the premise that failures of diplomacy can lead very directly to failures in AEF mission accomplishment. It proceeds from the reality of increasing complexity in diplomatic interactions with different types of actors at various levels of contact. Finally, it proceeds from the recognition by senior USAF leadership that diplomatic preparation for, and diplomatic sustainment of, AEF deployments and operations—i.e., expeditionary diplomacy—are urgent imperatives of mission success and, as such, they should be assigned a high priority throughout the Expeditionary Aerospace Force. As one senior leader has stated, “we have been burned in the past in several places around the world by taking for granted that we would receive diplomatic clearance. Taking for granted that we could bed down the initial deployment of airplanes. Taking for granted that we could fly past certain hours. My approach . . . is to remind people that we are guests in someone else’s home. And we need to think and behave that way.”⁸

The objective of this study is to stimulate thinking about a diplomatic preparation/sustainment strategy that can serve AEF planners and commanders. In the process of contemplating development of such a strategy, examples of extant diplomatic preparation/sustainment approaches will be evaluated with a view toward determining what ideas and measures are worthy of consideration for general and sustained implementation by the United States Air Force.

⁸ Lt Gen Michael Short, quoted in “Over Here, Over There,” *Airman*, October 1998.

Section 2

Current Approaches to Expeditionary Diplomacy

For purposes of discussing examples of ongoing diplomatic preparation and diplomatic sustainment measures, it is useful to consider Air Force-wide, MAJCOM, regional-component, and school-house initiatives that are aimed at coming to terms with the diplomatic and political challenges of operating into and from numerous far-flung locations outside the sovereignty of the United States.

Diplomatic Clearances

Arguably the most critical and portentous diplomatic enterprise affecting AEF deployments is the pursuit and maintenance of diplomatic access, overflight, and landing clearances. Critical, because without clearances there will be no forward-based expeditionary operations. Portentous, because the clearance process both affects and is affected by the state of relations with current and prospective host governments. Handled unsuccessfully, clearance requests are show stoppers; handled badly, they can delay or restrict operations and lead to damaged bilateral relations.

Under current procedures, aircraft clearances are requested by the aircraft-owning MAJCOMS, principally Air Combat Command and Air Mobility Command, although the MAJCOM Commander's authority may be delegated to satisfy mission requirements. Aircraft clearance requests are directed to appropriate national authorities by in-country American Embassy representatives, typically the U.S. Defense Attache.⁹

There are three types of personnel clearances: (i) theater clearances, granted by the regional CINC (Unified Commander) for official travel within the area of responsibility (AOR); (ii) special area clearances, granted by the U.S. Department of State (DoS) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy for official travel to countries designated as "special areas" by DoS; and (iii) country clearances, granted by foreign authorities (requested through American Embassies) for official travel to respective countries.¹⁰ Of

⁹ *Foreign Clearance Guide*, chapter 6, "Aircraft Clearances," <http://www.fcg.pentagon.mil>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, chapter 3, "Definitions," section A17; chapter 8, "Personnel Clearances," section F. Aircrews performing aircrew duties exclusively do not require personnel clearances. (Chapter 6, section A1)

the three types, it is the country clearances that are the object of deployment diplomacy, and over which host countries hold a veto.

Once access to a host country is achieved, operations in/from that country are governed by a separate set of agreements regarding foreign operating rights, foreign military rights, and foreign surveys.¹¹ All are within the general purview of Headquarters USAF/XONP as executive agent.

Steady-State versus Crisis-Response Operations

If handled properly, clearances for AEF deployments in support of steady-state operations ("ongoing contingencies" such as SOUTHERN WATCH) are less challenging to obtain than those for deployments in support of crisis-response operations ("pop-up contingencies"). Steady-state operations, involve predictable scheduling, continuity in host-country destinations, and level force requirements. As a consequence, they are much easier to deal with in the clearance process. Indeed, "blanket" clearances – issued for specified categories of flights or personnel travel, usually granted on a periodic basis¹² -- are often used for steady-state deployments.

Crisis-response clearances, on the other hand, are much more problematic, as crises by their very nature are short-notice and time-critical, and involve contentious issues. The aforementioned U.S. operations to resupply Israel in the 1973 Middle East war and to strike Libya in 1986 are cases in point.¹³ Short-notice aircraft clearance procedures are coordinated by HQ USAF/XONP.¹⁴

One key to success in achieving access during crises is to cultivate friendly, positive relations in normal times. It is too late to build relationships once a crisis occurs. "Our job . . . is to posture ourselves so that our presence is valuable to those who are going to need our help," according to General John P. Jumper, USAF. "I'm not sure we have always taken that sort of look at it before, but this is the way in the new expeditionary air force that we have to think about it. *We have to think about [the] cultural and diplomatic end of this ahead of the game . . .*"¹⁵ General Ralph E. Eberhart, USAF, has said that building friendly relations is key to successful deployment of AEFs. "As we continue to exercise and train with other nations, *we set the stage for when we might need access.*"¹⁶

¹¹ Ibid., chapter 9, "Requests for USAF Foreign Operation Rights, Foreign Military Rights, and Foreign Surveys."

¹² *Foreign Clearance Guide*, chapter 3, section A4.

¹³ The 1958 U.S. intervention in Lebanon offers another example of crisis action impediments. In this case overflight problems with Austria, Switzerland, and Greece adversely affected USAF deployments into Turkey. (Maj Patrick J. Smith, USAF, "Building the Eagle's Nest: Challenges in Basing the Air Expeditionary Force," Maxwell AFB, AL: School of Advanced Airpower Studies Thesis, June 1997, pp. 23-31, *passim*.)

¹⁴ *Foreign Clearance Guide*, Chapter 6, section F5.

¹⁵ General Jumper is quoted in "Operating Abroad," *Air Force Magazine*, December 1998, p. 28.

¹⁶ "Access Key to AEF Success."

While access rights and operating rights cannot be guaranteed in advance, even among friends (as we have seen), and while much of the enabling strategic-level diplomacy required is beyond the purview of the Air Force alone, there are additional measures that can be undertaken by the USAF to maximize the prospects of diplomatic clearances in both steady-state and crisis situations.

Analysis and Recommendations

There are really two pieces to the discussion of diplomatic clearances: (i) ideas on how to facilitate the clearance process itself; and (ii) thoughts on how to cultivate relationships with current and potential host countries so that they will be more likely to say yes to future access requests.

With regard to the first, the current decentralized system for requesting diplomatic clearances to overfly, transit, and operate from other countries seems to be working reasonably well on a routine basis, though aircrew stories abound regarding missed departures, delays en route, diversions, and work-arounds.¹⁷ Such problems are probably inevitable, given the politics and national pride involved in these matters of sovereignty.

There is also a sense of frustration among some mid-level action officers that the level of interest in the U.S. Government regarding diplomatic clearances is too low and that situations are sometimes allowed to drift unnecessarily into crisis due to inattention or due to insufficient horsepower brought to bear. Whether a more centralized,¹⁸ more authoritative system for requesting, monitoring, and following through on clearance requests would reduce the incidence of problems or merely create different ones is an open question and one beyond the scope of this study.

How best to cultivate relationships between the USAF and current/prospective recipients of access requests is a question different from the one about process. Its answers lie in a combination of the current and proposed initiatives of the Air Expeditionary Force Center, Foreign Area Officer Program, USAF Special Operations and Air Mobility Warfare school houses, and U.S. Central Command Air Forces.

¹⁷ One persistent story regards an occasion when a CINC and his entire entourage, airborne en route to his AOR, had to abort his mission, turn around, and return home because of lack of landing clearance at his proposed destination. It is not yet clear whether this incident says more about the clearance process or more about the arbitrariness of certain would-be host governments.

¹⁸ During the 1996 AEF III test deployment, Grand Forks AFB coordinated 905th Air Refueling Squadron diplomatic clearances for aircraft going into Moron AB, Spain, and Langley AFB coordinated diplomatic clearances for the same aircraft going into Doha, Qatar. "The process worked, but the potential is there for clearances to be missed when more than one agency is working clearances for a given aircraft." (Joint Uniform Lessons Learned report #32831-07299 dated 10/23/96)

Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center (AEFC)

The AEF Center (briefly known as the “AEF Management Staff” or AMS) was stood up at Langley Air Force Base in the summer of 1999 to help manage transformation of the USAF into its new Expeditionary Air Force (EAF) organization,¹⁹ and subsequently to manage rotating AEF deployments.

According to Air Force Instruction (AFI) 10-400 of 01 October 1999, “Expeditionary Aerospace Force Planning,” the AEFC is the centralized management team that prepares AEF force packages for: (i) steady-state rotations (like Operation SOUTHERN WATCH and Operation NORTHERN WATCH); for (ii) on-call (crisis response) Aerospace Expeditionary Wing (AEW) operational requirements; and for (iii) escalation to surge or full-scale major theater war (MTW) operations with subsequent return to steady-state operational levels.

The AEFC facilitates AEF/AEW management and administrative tasks to include: AEF/AEW *preparation for a given tasking and location*; providing AEF/AEW continuity; assisting the sourcing of forces (UTCs/individuals) for USAF component requirements using MAJCOM-approved schedules; *developing unit preparation and training templates*; guiding all aspects of AEF/AEW planning, to include TPFDD refinement and DRMD preparation; and monitoring AEF/AEW readiness.²⁰

For purposes of this study, we can infer that AEFC’s role in diplomatic preparation and diplomatic sustainment of AEF deployments follows implicitly from the functions italicized above. “Preparation for a given . . . location” may be seen to include facilitating diplomatic access and host-nation cooperation/assistance. These objectives are in turn abetted by “unit preparation and training templates.”

It is correct to say that the Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center is a work in progress in the sense that its stipulated roles and functions – and the most efficient and effective ways to fulfill them – were being refined as the first complete cycle of paired AEF rotations proceeded through the calendar year 2000.²¹ Diplomatic preparation and sustainment of AEF deployments are similarly being refined as part of the larger process of inventing the AEFC. Responsibilities for expeditionary diplomacy are also being

¹⁹ In this transformation role, AEFC briefly shared responsibilities with Air Staff Directorate XOPE, which went out of existence in the Spring of 2000.

²⁰ Italics added. AFI 10-400, p. 13. Acronyms not explained in the quotation are: UTCs (unit type codes); MAJCOM (major command); TPFDD (time-phased force and deployment data); and DRMD (Deployment Requirements Manning Document).

²¹ For example, AEFs 9 and 10 were scheduled to be on call during the period 01 September – 30 November 2000. Two of the ten AEFs are successively on call for three-month periods (along with one of the two designated AEWs and one of the five Lead Mobility Wings). AEFs are “buckets of capabilities” from which elements can be drawn to fit the requirements of particular operations. After their three-month periods of being on call or deployed, AEFs continue through the balance of their now standard 15-month cycles which include periods of maintenance, training, and preparations for their next on-call/deployment period.

shared with other commands – both administrative and operational. That said, an inventory of expeditionary diplomacy focal points within the AEFC can be identified at this stage of that organization's evolution.

EAF Online

"Preparation and training" for different locations – or, more to the point, destinations – is assisted by the availability on a multi-purpose web site of information that includes coverage of geopolitical issues and host country characteristics, as well as links to lessons learned from previous rotations and links to related information sources. This web site, "EAF Online" can be accessed through "dot mil" and "dot gov" locations at <https://aefcenter.acc.af.mil/eafoonline>.²² Other web sites on NIPRNET (non-classified but sensitive internet protocol router network) and SIPRNET (secret internet protocol router network) are referenced in deployment guides and special instructions (SPINS) originated by the AEFC.

Comprehensive evaluation of these expanding sites is beyond the scope of this study, but they give the impression of heavy emphasis on operational and logistical matters, rather than geopolitical and diplomatic issues. In principle, however, such sites are also potentially very useful in displaying the sort of information that can help to sensitize deploying airmen to host-country cultural environments, as well as to diplomatic hazards and opportunities.

AEFC Lessons Learned

The AEF Center has three sequential responsibilities: to prepare AEFs for deployments; to monitor them while deployed, and to follow up deployments with a view toward providing continuity between AEFs. The third responsibility is abetted by an AEFC Lessons Learned archive accessed through the Center's web site. Lessons from the test AEF deployments of the mid-to-late 1990s are available, as well as those since implementation of the 10-AEF rotational system on 01 October 1999.²³ The Air Force Center for Knowledge Sharing and Lessons Learned (AFCKSLL) and the Joint Center for Lessons Learned (JCLL) can also be mined for USAF-relevant information.²⁴

Expeditionary diplomacy issues are not addressed as a separate, identifiable category, but they can be teased out using categories such as diplomatic clearances, force protection, host-nation relations, local contracting, etc. Measures are in prospect to optimize the lessons learned function, including adaptation of a universal reporting system (different formats now are used for different databases) and development of a

²² A new EAF Portal was scheduled to have been launched in March 2001 that would consolidate functions of the AEFC Web page, EAF Online, and Lessons Learned in one location. ("EAF On-Line" briefing prepared for the AEF 5/6 Conference, 7 February 2001, POC Capt Kimberly A. Kadryna, USAF, AEFC.)

²³ For a comparative analysis of four test AEFs between 1995 and 1997 and an overview of the 10-AEF construct, see Dowdy, *Testing the Aerospace Expeditionary Force Concept*.

²⁴ These sites, respectively: <http://afknowledge.langlely.af.mil/AEFL> and <http://jell.jwfc.jfcom.smil.mil>.

capability to “push out” lessons learned (as opposed to the current reliance on “pull out” inquiries).²⁵

Prospective Developments

A third initiative under way at AEFC – in addition to the aforementioned EAF Online web site and the lessons learned system – is the development of a “Commanders’ Playbook” by the continuity cell of the Center. This is a useful vehicle for providing commanders with the tools they need to carry out their AEF duties and to prepare their airmen for deployment. While now primarily operational/logistical in content, it has the potential to address considerations of expeditionary diplomacy. This tool was under development in 2000. Version one was posted on the web on 01 December 2000, along with a companion quick reference “Commanders’ Checklist.”²⁶

Finally, possible future initiatives by the AEFC that could facilitate diplomatic preparation and sustainment of AEFs are the following: prospective partnering with the USAF’s regional orientation program at Hurlburt Field (see below); production of online cultural instruction; innovative uses of video teleconferencing (VTC); and periodic, scheduled broadcasts of area orientation briefings targeted to deploying personnel.²⁷ These and other desirable measures can increasingly be addressed as the more immediate imperatives of EAF implementation find solutions and thus decline in urgency.²⁸

Analysis and Recommendations

In its first year of operation, the new AEF Center initiated steps that, taken together, should prove to be quite useful in preparing Air Force units for the diplomatic challenges of deployment. In implementing its charter, the AEFC has set up web sites and databases intended to help fulfill its broader functions. Selectively accessed and utilized, these repositories of information can yield up information relevant to diplomatic concerns. But they could be even more useful.

For example, improvements could be made to the “lessons learned” database that make it more responsive to diplomacy-related key word inquiries. From sampling the lessons from previous deployments, one suspects, however, that neither the reporting format nor the typical reporting officer is sensitive to diplomatic-cultural-political factors. One foreseeable remedy to this particular issue may be increasing the numbers of Foreign Area Officers in the field as the USAF FAO Program is fully developed. (See below for additional comments on this topic.)

²⁵ Conversation with Lt Col William Price, USAF, Chief AEFC Analysis Branch, in a visit to AEFC at Langley AFB by the author on 16 May 2000.

²⁶ Conversation with Capt Kadryna, USAF, at AEFC 16 May 2000 and e-mail communication from Maj Julie A. Wyzywany, USAF, AEFC, dated 25 January 2001.

²⁷ Interview of Brig Gen Edward LaFontaine, USAF, Director, AEF Center Blue Team, 16 May 2000.

²⁸ Ibid.

With regard to the EAF Online web site, the political-military content appears to be primarily descriptive rather than analytical in nature. While knowledge is the beginning of understanding, "facts" alone are of limited utility in dealing with foreign cultures. Through consultations with and contributions from recognized area specialists in the Air Force, DoD generally, other government departments, and/or the world of academe, the analytical content could be enriched. EAF Online is off to a good start, and it has the potential for considerable development in pol-mil content.

Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program

One of the more promising Air Force-wide initiatives to facilitate overseas operations has been inauguration of it Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Program. Air Force Instruction (AFI) 16-109 ("Foreign Area Officer Program") of 01 June 1998 provides guidance for establishing and sustaining the Air Force FAO Program.²⁹ The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs (SAF/IA) has the policy lead and directs the FAO Proponent Office (originally established in June 1997), that in turn manages the FAO Program.

Background

One of the major steps leading to establishment of the Air Force FAO program was taken at CORONA South 96 when senior USAF leaders directed the Air Force to develop culturally-aware and foreign-language-proficient officers, stipulating that 10 percent of the Air Force officer corps should be proficient in a foreign language by 2005.³⁰ By February 2001, there were 3,104 USAF officers proficient in a foreign language – about 52 percent of the 6,000 or so required to constitute ten percent.³¹

"When Air Force senior officers tasked SAF/IA to establish a service FAO Program, they were reacting to clear evidence (e.g., DoD and AF Inspector General reports, AF Process Action Teams recommendations, etc.) that the Air Force needed to do a better job of recruiting, developing, managing, and employing officers with foreign language proficiency and international affairs expertise. Furthermore, they were responding to the new, complex global security environment in a post-Cold War world."³² That environment has been a major factor in influencing the initiative to transform the USAF into an Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) able to respond to a broad spectrum of traditional and non-traditional military missions, often as a coalition partner in joint and combined operations.

²⁹ This program supercedes the USAF Foreign Area Specialist Program (FASP). AFI 16-109 implements Department of Defense Directive 1315.17 of 22 February 1997 which mandated that each of the services formalize a FAO program.

³⁰ "History of the FAO Program," <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afaao/fao/history.htm>. This so-called "ten by five" goal has been interpreted by SAF/IA to mean 10 percent of regular officers, and "proficient" has been defined as 2/2 (or better) on the Defense Language Proficiency Test according to Capt Joseph Pilkus, USAF, Chief, Global Skills Development, International Airmen Division (SAF/IAA), telephone interview, 23 February 2001.

³¹ Figures were provided by Capt Pilkus, 20 March 2001 e-mail. "Senior leaders have been briefed that we have two choices regarding the 10X5 goal," Capt Pilkus writes. "First, we need to plus-up funding to meet the 10X5 goal OR, without funding, we WILL NOT meet the goal until 2010."

³² USAF FAO Notes, <http://www.faoa.org/service/af-fao1.html>.

FAO Roles and Qualifications

Air Force FAOs are expected to play a key role in combined operations by facilitating communications and understanding among coalition partners. In the words of the AFI 16-109,

the Air Force FAO Program contributes to key aspects of the Air Force mission by developing a cadre of qualified and experienced line officers who possess foreign language competency and regional expertise essential for effective interaction with foreign militaries and organizations. FAOs ensure productive engagement with partners and allies across the range of operations, including support of Air Force participation in contingency operations.³³

Selection for award of the "qualified FAO" 16F3X Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) by an FAO selection board is based on three principal criteria. (i) The cornerstone of the FAO Program is foreign language proficiency. A minimum of 2/2 must be scored on the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT).³⁴ Further, scores must be current as of the most recent test cycle. (ii) Qualifying officers must also possess a graduate degree in foreign area studies or international relations. (iii) Finally, and possibly in lieu of a graduate-level area studies degree, significant overseas professional experience is a qualifying factor, depending on the nature and scope of that experience. Requirements for an "entry-level FAO" (16F1X AFSC) are not as stringent as those for 16F3X.³⁵ Applicants must be line officers already qualified in their primary AFSC before seeking an FAO AFSC, which, when awarded, cannot be an officer's primary AFSC.³⁶ It is, instead, a "career broadening code."

Education and Training

In contrast to the Army FAO program, there is no formal USAF training pipeline. FAO candidates are drawn from the pool of officers who are already capable in a foreign language at a 2/2 level, with a Masters Degree in an area studies-type academic program and/or significant overseas experience. However, once awarded an FAO AFSC, officers are then eligible for qualifications enhancement opportunities. Language and Area Studies Immersion (LASI) provides officers who have at least a 1/1 on the DLPT in select critical languages an opportunity to spend one month in country studying that language.³⁷

³³ AFI 16-109, paragraph 1.2.

³⁴ The DLPT consists of three categories on a scale of zero to 3, with plusses. A "2/2" means proficiency in listening and reading, respectively. The third category is speaking, as determined by OPI (oral proficiency indicator) standards. A "3/3/3" would indicate true fluency. Note that the 16F3X AFSC requires listening and reading proficiency, but not speaking proficiency. (Information provided by Capt Pilkus, SAF/IAA.)

³⁵ A 1+/1+ on the DLPT is required. (Capt Pilkus, SAF/IAA)

³⁶ Contents of this paragraph are from "Criteria," <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afaao/fao/criteria.htm>.

³⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions," <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afaao/fao/faq.htm>.

A new Area Studies Advanced Program (ASAP) affords FAOs an opportunity to conduct academic research in their regions of expertise. Applications must be approved by a selection board and, at the completion of overseas field work, the officer must submit a research paper of high quality. Program costs are expected to average \$6,000 for 30 days of travel.³⁸

Maintenance of foreign language proficiency is an individual responsibility. Officers who have at least a 2/2 on the DLPT may qualify for Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP). In addition to maintaining language skills, FAOs must stay up to date on pertinent U.S. political, economic, and military objectives, as well as the current political-military situation within their region of specialty.³⁹ Pol-mil currency may be facilitated by attending regional seminars at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI),⁴⁰ or by attending the USAF Special Operations School (USAFSOS) at Hurlburt Field, Florida. (See discussion below.)

Analysis and Recommendations

Of all the initiatives currently under way, the USAF FAO Program arguably has the most promising long-term potential to serve the needs of expeditionary diplomacy. It is off to a good start, with several hundred officers having qualified for the FAO Specialty Code.⁴¹ Whether the Program achieves its potential, however, is an open question. There is evidence to suggest that the Air Force has not yet invested a sufficient degree of commitment to assure success of the FAO Program. One indicator of increased commitment will be mandated change in the Air Force personnel system. Tracking FAO qualifications and assigning FAOs to appropriate billets are ongoing challenges. As of this writing, the operative Air Force Instruction, AFI 16-109 of 01 June 1998, was under revision. It remains to be seen whether the revisions, when published, will represent a greater or lesser degree of commitment to the Program, or whether they will incorporate any of the changes of the sort recommended in this study.

The Program, as described above and elaborated in AFI 16-109, suffers from at least two serious weaknesses in the opinion of this analyst: (i) it stipulates that the FAO AFSCs cannot be an Air Force officer's primary specialty code; and (ii) it provides no formal USAF training for officer development into qualified FAOs.

The fact that officers must still compete for promotions within their primary AFSCs seems to ratify and re-institutionalize the disincentives for career-minded officers to seek a succession of FAO assignments or to devote themselves whole-heartedly to a career as

³⁸ Information on ASAP is from <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afao/fao/asap.htm>.

³⁹ AFI 16-109, paragraph 2.3.1.

⁴⁰ "Professional Continuing Education (PCE) at the Foreign Service Institute," <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afao/fao/pcefsi.htm>. The FAO Proponent Office will fund all cost associated with attendance.

⁴¹ According to SAF/IAA figures, between 750 and 800 officers have applied for FAO AFSCs and 448 had been accepted by March 2001. Most are captains, majors, and lieutenant colonels. Thirty-nine percent were intelligence officers; 13 percent were pilots. (Information is from Col Anthony A. Aldwell, USAF, Chief, SAF/IAA, briefing to EUCOM J-1, 06 March 2001.)

true area specialists. Only those officers placing a low priority on achieving maximum promotion potential are likely to commit enthusiastically to a FAO career – or even to apply in the first place for a FAO AFSC.

And, by providing no direct instruction or assistance to officers seeking to qualify as FAOs, the Air Force is left to choose from the pool of officers who have achieved qualifications on their own and have chosen to apply. Put another way, the Air Force is not “growing” FAOs; it is only “anointing” already-qualified officers who happen to apply. Obviously, this is not the optimal way to develop a corps of regionalists attuned from the beginning of their specialist development to the needs of the Expeditionary Air Force.

The outlines of remedies to the two programmatic weaknesses described above are easy to trace. (i) Create a separate primary FAO AFSC, thus a FAO career path with its own built-in promotion incentives and opportunities. If necessary, due to the small size of the AFSC pool, promote a high percentage of long-serving (and deserving) FAOs, based on much the same rationale that higher percentages of physicians (in comparison to line officers) are promoted – namely, that the billets are available (e.g., attache billets) and that retention of these specialists is an important consideration. (ii) The Air Force should grow its own FAOs. Identify captains⁴² who have the aptitude and interest and send them to graduate school full time for a master’s degree in international relations or area studies, and for language study in a high-priority language (e.g., Chinese, Farsi, Arabic, etc.). Once they have qualified for the FAO AFSC, then round out their development with the programs now offered to “walk-on” FAOs. This sports analogy is suggestive: the USAF should emphasize recruitment and development of “scholarship” FAO candidates, while still accepting a certain percentage of well-qualified walk-ons. As now constituted, the Air Force FAO Program is wholly dependent on “walk-on” candidates.

Once a sizeable corps of well-qualified FAOs is established – and, indeed, during its establishment – desirable billets can be identified, created, and filled.⁴³ One can envision that this would make a dramatically positive contribution to the needs of the Air Force in the area of expeditionary diplomacy. The following initiatives may then be worthy of consideration. (i) Start with placement of more and better-qualified attaches and assistant attaches at all important American Embassy locations. (ii) Create billets for, and appoint FAOs as, political-military affairs advisors at multiple command levels within the EAF construct, including MAJCOMs, Component Commands, Lead Wing Commands, etc. (iii) Assign FAOs in such a way as to insure that an appropriate regionally-qualified, language-qualified FAO deploys with all AEF Aerospace Expeditionary Task Forces

⁴² Recruiting officers with four or more years in an alternative Air Force career field, officers with predominately line AFSCs, will insure that FAOs are well “blued” before becoming regionalists, thus capable of working knowledgeably and effectively with line officers in their subsequent assignments.

⁴³ As of early 2001 there were 153 billets coded for FAOs, of which 108 were attache billets. A billet conversion is underway in early 2001 to convert 16Ps (political-military advisors) to 16Fs (FAOs). If full conversion of 16Ps is achieved, FAO billets would then number 250-300. (Capt Pilkus, SAF/IAA)

(ASETfs).⁴⁴ (iv) Assign FAOs to school-house tours on the faculties of Air Command and Staff College (ACSC), Air War College (AWC), etc.⁴⁵

Other ideas for possible incorporation into the USAF FAO Program:

- Assign FAOs to one-to-two year tours in appropriate bureaus of the Department of State (DoS). This would not only enhance regionalist credentials, but also provide professional contacts in DoS and insights into the interagency process and DoS institutional culture.
- Recruit naturalized native speakers of designated high-priority languages into the USAF and into the FAO Program. Air Force ROTC, Officer Training School (OTS), and the USAF Academy could all be instrumental in this regard. True fluency in some strategically critical languages is virtually impossible to achieve by non-native speakers – certainly not without years of formal study that would not be cost effective for the Air Force.⁴⁶
- Develop a separate but complementary enlisted linguists program with training, proficiency pay (“pro-pay”), and assignment incentives. Most enlisted linguists are now utilized almost exclusively in cryptology. Enlisted linguists in a variety of other specialty codes could be particularly valuable in foreign cultural contexts where officers would not be as fully accepted.⁴⁷ Such enlisted linguists would have the language abilities and the overseas experience, but not necessarily the post-graduate degree qualifications, of FAOs. They might instead offer a variety of operational skills that are rare among officers.
- Offer enhanced language pro-pay rewards for both officers and enlisted for designated high priority languages and designated levels of fluency.⁴⁸ This would be a hedge against losses to the outside economy. For retention purposes, these highly qualified and high-value individuals should be offered as high a level of financial incentives as now enjoyed by rated officers.

⁴⁴ The rotation of FAOs periodically through operational assignments should keep them attuned to the needs of USAF operators as well as enhance their ability to “talk the talk” with foreign contemporaries. (This latter point was made by Capt Michael A. Oren, Chief, Mobility Forces and Programs, Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces, in comments on an earlier draft of this study.)

⁴⁵ ACSC, AWC, and other Air Education and Training Command (AETC) schools have not been heretofore discussed in this study, but, in any reckoning of Air Force assets contributing to preparation for responsibilities of expeditionary diplomacy, these and other Professional Military Education (PME) institutions must be included. Regional studies are incorporated into the various curricula, and the Air War College continues to include regional field trips as a major feature of its academic year. In this context, continued funding of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program is essential. IMET underwrites participation of many of the International Officers (IOs) attending ACSC and AWC each year.

⁴⁶ Spanish, German, French, and Russian language skills predominate among Air Force FAOs. (SAF/IAA)

⁴⁷ Maj S. J. Moree, USAF, recommends the use of non-commissioned officer linguists in all deploying Security Forces units. (“USAF Security Forces and Foreign Language Skills in the Global Environment: Are We Prepared?” Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Command and Staff College Research Report, April 1999.)

⁴⁸ Strategically critical/high priority languages such as Arabic, Farsi, and Chinese are not well represented among USAF FAOs. (SAF/IAA)

- Open up Air Force tuition assistance (now limited to degree-granting institutions) to non-degree-granting, but nevertheless highly effective, language schools. And plus-up language training funding in order to meet the “ten by five” goal.⁴⁹
- Mandate more rigorous foreign language requirements in Air Force officer accession programs, principally the Air Force Academy and Air Force ROTC.⁵⁰

A greater level of commitment by the U.S. Air Force to its FAO Program, incorporating some of the above, or similar, recommendations, would be an indication that Air Force leadership recognizes how vital regional (including linguistic) expertise is to the success of the EAF concept and culture – and how challenging it is to develop and retain such expertise. Without effective expeditionary diplomacy, AEF operations will not be fully successful – indeed, may not occur at all. And without a strong FAO program, expeditionary diplomacy will almost certainly be less effective.⁵¹

⁴⁹ This need was indentified by Capt Pilkus, SAF/IAA. See also note 32.

⁵⁰ Capt Pilkus.

⁵¹ As one commentator on an earlier version of this study observed, the U.S. armed forces might be well advised to take a joint approach to FAO development and assignment. “The U.S. military ought to have a pool of qualified FAO pol-mil officers from across the services that can . . . interface and work together as a team. Training and qualification standards should be identical and a good dose of joint doctrine along with country/region specific knowledge is a must . . . cross-service tours could be implemented.” (Maj David H. Dahl, USAF, East Asia Desk Officer, PACAF, 29 March 2001 e-mail to study author)

USAF Special Operations School (USAFSOS)

The curriculum taught at Hurlburt Air Force Base deserves prominent mention in this study, both as an example of what the Air Force is now doing to prepare AEF personnel for deployment diplomacy, and because it is suggestive of how pol-mil currency and cultural awareness can be enhanced, not only for FAOs but also for AEF personnel generally.

The USAF Special Operations School became a reporting unit of the newly-established Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) on 22 May 1990.⁵² The USAFSOS teaches about 80 classes a year representing approximately two dozen formal courses. It also offers about 25 off-station tutorials. The curriculum includes both thematic courses – e.g., Dynamics of International Terrorism, Intro to Special Operations, Revolutionary Warfare, and Cross Cultural Communications – and regional orientation courses on Asia-Pacific; Latin America; Russia, Central Europe, and Central Asia; Sub-Saharan Africa; and the Middle East. “The goal of each orientation course is to provide students with a basic and introductory level of understanding of the historical, political, military, economic, religious, and cultural dynamics of the region as a foundation for application in current or future planning or operations.”⁵³

While in theory it would be desirable to send all deploying AEF personnel through USAFSOS, it is, of course, impossible for numerous reasons. The School may thus be seen as one of the solutions to the need to prepare AEF personnel for the practice of deployment diplomacy.

Analysis and Recommendations

The most compelling recommendation regarding Hurlburt is that the Special Operations School should keep on doing what it is doing in the way of regional orientation courses and related thematic offerings. American citizens in general are likely to remain largely uninterested in and uninformed regarding peoples and events beyond our shores. However, it is increasingly incumbent on USAF personnel, as they move to engagement operations and away from the main operating bases characteristic of the Cold War, to strive for a genuine understanding of foreign peoples and cultures in forward locations where they deploy and operate. By most accounts, the USAF Special Operations School has been performing a valuable service in promoting such understanding – a service that could be made more valuable by offering more of it.

⁵² The institutional roots of USAFSOS extend back to April 1967 and activation of the USAF Special Air Warfare School. As of this writing, plans were in the works for transformation of USAFSOS into the “Joint Special Operations University.”

⁵³ This quotation is from the following web site: <http://www.hq.af.mil/af/saf/ia/afao/fao/afsos.htm>. Other information on USAFSOS is from <http://www.hurlburt.af.mil/usafsos/>.

That said, three related recommendations may also be worthy of consideration: (i) fill future school quotas with the objective uppermost of maximizing the cultural awareness and political sensitivity of personnel most likely to deploy within the AEF rotation; (ii) consider customizing a larger portion of the curriculum to the region-specific practical needs of personnel who will actually deal with host-nation counterparts on a day-to-day basis; and (iii) consider offering regional advanced courses to FAOs and prospective deploying commanders that go beyond the “orientation” level of instruction.

Air Mobility Warfare Center (AMWC)

One of the more promising recent initiatives aimed at preparing the USAF in general and Air Mobility Command (AMC) in particular for challenges requiring expeditionary diplomacy is the 12-day Deployed Commander and Staff Course (DCSC) offered at Ft. Dix, New Jersey.

Taught seven times a year under auspices of the Phoenix Readiness Program⁵⁴ of the Air Mobility Warfare Center, the DCSC includes blocks of instruction on the roles/capabilities of American Embassies abroad, on dealing with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and on the United Nations. Geared to the role of Lead Mobility Wings in Humanitarian Relief Operations (HUMROs), the course is divided about 50-50 between classroom and field exercises. The latter include role-playing interactions with host-country officials that incorporate diplomatic challenges arising from cultural differences.

The Phoenix Readiness Program as of June 2000 included 15 courses in addition to the Deployed Commander and Staff Course, all intended to prepare support and security personnel for various aspects of expeditionary force deployments. Typically, over half of the Phoenix Readiness students have been from AMC, but Air Combat Command (ACC) and sister services – even the U.S. Coast Guard – have sent students.⁵⁵ The Phoenix Readiness Program brings in “mentors” who have experienced “real world” deployments, and it circulates survey forms to deployed forces for feedback on the relevance of the Program curriculum.⁵⁶

Analysis and Recommendations

While the DCSC offers only three blocks of instruction on topics directly related to deployment diplomacy, it is unique in recognizing the need for such course content and innovative in the field exercise portion of the course, which includes foreign culture role-playing. The Deployed Commander and Staff Course has a current maximum throughput of around 245 students annually.⁵⁷ The obvious need is for more instruction in this or other Air Mobility Warfare Center courses on the cultural/political challenges of expeditionary operations.

⁵⁴ The Phoenix Readiness Program was established at Ft. Dix in November 1999 under auspices of the 421st Ground Control Combat Readiness Squadron, according to Lt Col William Paliwoda, the 421st Deputy Commander. DCSC content information was provided by Lt Col Paliwoda (telephone interview, 28 June 2000). Additional information on Phoenix Readiness and the Deployed Commander and Staff Course can be accessed through the following web site: <http://www.amwc.af.mil>.

⁵⁵ Lt Col Paliwoda discerns “a fairly strong undercurrent . . . leaning toward making PR [Phoenix Readiness] an AF-wide course rather than just an AMC course.” (e-mail correspondence with author, 19 January 2001)

⁵⁶ Information in this paragraph was provided by Lt Col Paliwoda.

⁵⁷ Lt Col Paliwoda, e-mail correspondence, 19 January 2001.

While Air Force MAJCOMs, just exemplified by AMC, play important roles in expeditionary diplomacy as we have seen, it is the USAF component commands under geographic Commanders-in-Chief (CINCs) that have special knowledge and special responsibilities relating to their respective regions. U.S. Air Forces Central Command (CENTAF) is a case in point.

U.S. Air Forces Central Command (CENTAF)

CENTAF has in place and under development several initiatives that together facilitate preparation of designated Air Force units for deployment diplomacy in the Central Command area of responsibility (AOR). Political-military information is being made available through four mediums: traveling "road-show" briefings; a CENTAF SIPRNET site; compact disks (CDs); and hardcopy packages prepared by the CENTAF political-military affairs advisor.

Traveling Briefings

Quarterly "road-show" briefings by CENTAF intelligence personnel at AEF Lead Wing home bases began in April 2000 and, by early January 2001, had been presented to AEF 7 at Barksdale Air Force Base, AEF 9 at Cannon, AEF 2 at Dyess, and AEF 4 at Lakenheath. As of this writing, AEF 6 was scheduled for an April 2001 briefing at Shaw.

Advance invitations to the briefings are sent out to appropriate subordinate unit representatives. On average, about 25 intelligence personnel are trained at each location. While the Lead Wing hosts the conference, there are usually five to seven bases represented at each conference. Notifications for the Lead Wing briefings are optimally issued six months ahead of the commencement of on-call status, and the actual briefings are scheduled about three months ahead of scheduled on-call/deployment periods. While the content of these pre-deployment briefings has been predominately of an operational nature, they have typically included a pol-mil update of major issues in the deployment area concerned.⁵⁸

Follow-up visits to deployed units in the field are undertaken to evaluate the usefulness of the predeployment Lead Wing briefings described above. AEF 7 elements were visited in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and AEF 2 in Saudi Arabia in July and December 2000, respectively. Follow-up debriefs have focused on the relevance of predeployment briefings, on what information ought to be added or subtracted, and on what important information should be passed to follow-on deploying units.

Electronic Briefings

Complementing the road-show briefings is display on the CENTAF SIPRNET site of operational area information of considerable variety and quantity and amenable to continuous updating. Road-show briefing slides are also posted at that site.

⁵⁸ The modus operandi of the CENTAF briefing teams was described by Capt Timothy West, USAF, during an interview by the author at Shaw AFB on 18 May 2000 and in an e-mail to the author dated 06 Feb 2001.

To make comprehensive and timely information available through another medium, the CENTAF A2 (intelligence) shop prepares and distributes compact disks to designated AEF units for each on-call rotation. By February 2001, up to 650 megabites of information were being passed on in this fashion, including some pol-mil content. Each succeeding disk contains about three months' worth of updates. One to two hundred megabites of information is typically gleaned on visits to deployed units.⁵⁹ Thus, the concept shows considerable promise, allowing relatively inexpensive and wide distribution of briefing and background materials to include pol-mil information.

Orientation Notebook

A fourth CENTAF initiative has emerged from the office of the political-military affairs advisor to the CENTAF Commander in the form of a briefing notebook. This "AOR Orientation" notebook has been made available in the past mainly to deploying Joint Task Force-Southwest Asia (JTF-SWA) personnel, but it has the potential for wider distribution to appropriate AEF personnel.⁶⁰ In its January 2000 version, this unclassified reference book contained: maps; country profiles (including political histories); other-nation military rank charts; cultural guidelines; and sections on Islam, Arabic phrases, and additional information sources including web sites.⁶¹ In contrast to the traveling briefings, SIPRNET information site, and CD distribution, this pol-mil notebook is almost exclusively concerned with information that facilitates what this study has described as "deployment diplomacy."

Analysis and Recommendations

CENTAF, in part because it has always been "expeditionary" in orientation, has been forward-leaning in the provision of information and guidance in matters relating directly or indirectly to deployment diplomacy. As intimated above, this component command

⁵⁹ Capt West, e-mail dated 06 February 2001.

⁶⁰ This area orientation notebook can be considered a lineal descendant of the "Indian Ocean Factbook," compiled during the 1960s and 1970s for use by U.S. Navy units attached to the Middle East Force and other naval units operating in the Indian Ocean. The "Qatar Playbook" resulting from deployments of AEFs III and IV of 1996-97 is a more narrowly-focused attempt to compile information useful to deploying units, though with less pol-mil content. (See Dowdy, *Testing the Aerospace Expeditionary Force Concept*, pp. 9-14 passim; p. 12.)

⁶² This notebook, dated 10 January 2000, was compiled by Capt Ricky D. Cox, USAF, then CENTAF Political-Military Affairs Advisor.

may be seen as a useful prototype for initiatives across the Air Force. The traveling road show, SIPRNET site, updated CD distribution, and feedback collection visits to deployed units in the Gulf are all worthy of continuation and emulation.

The AOR Orientation notebook produced and distributed by the CENTAF Political-Military Affairs Advisor is a product that deserves replication in other USAF component commands. The Pol-Mil Advisor roles at CENTAF involving education, protocol, liaison with regional officials, etc. exemplify the sorts of contributions that can be made by well-qualified FAOs strategically positioned throughout the Air Force.

Section 3

Conclusion and Recommendations

There is considerable evidence, both in rhetoric and in action, that U.S. Air Force leadership is alert to the diplomatic imperatives associated with expeditionary operations.⁶² Taken together, the Air Force-wide, MAJCOM, regional-component, and school-house initiatives described in this study represent a solid start in coming to terms with the diplomatic and political challenges of operating into and from numerous far-flung locations. However, while many constructive measures are being undertaken, it is apparent from this study of expeditionary diplomacy that more can be done and should be done in the area of political-military preparations.

The shortcoming most apparent to this writer is the absence of any single USAF organization that has the institutional "big picture" in the area of expeditionary diplomacy.⁶³ It was not unusual in this writer's experience for one command staff to be unaware of the measures being undertaken by other commands. It follows that no single authority has developed and implemented an optimized, integrated approach toward meeting the newly-salient requirement for American airmen to be effective expeditionary diplomats as well as expeditionary warriors.

The decentralized, ad hoc approaches discussed in these pages have together contributed to achievement of considerable progress in the preparation of expeditionary diplomats. Proposals have been offered throughout to make these worthwhile initiatives even more productive. But the combination of these and other approaches is nevertheless inadequate to the total need because of lack of uniform (and uniformly high) standards, unavoidable gaps in the coverage and content of educational initiatives, and inefficient redundancies.

The survey of initiatives described in Section 2 is certainly not comprehensive of all that is under way in the U.S. Air Force. For example, other component commands, such as USAFE and PACAF, are beginning to address the requirements of expeditionary

⁶² This attentiveness starts at the top. Gen Michael E. Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff, has had since August 2000 a State Department Minister-Counselor as his Policy Adviser (POLAD). For details, see Jennifer Palmer, "Adviser helps Air Force navigate foreign policy maze," *Air Force Times*, 25 September 2000, p.4.

⁶³ This study has been sponsored by, and written for, the U.S. Air Force in the context of its ongoing EAF cultural transformation. Obviously, there are crucial inter-service and interagency factors at work that will abet or frustrate USAF initiatives within the general domain of expeditionary diplomacy. Such factors are beyond the purview of this study.

diplomacy.⁶⁴ CENTAF, arguably the component pacesetter in this field, has been taken as representative, for reasons having to do as much with the nature of the Central Command AOR and the fact of ongoing operations in SOUTHERN WATCH, as with the noteworthy initiatives of the CENTAF A2 shop and pol-mil advisor.

Though not comprehensive of all expeditionary diplomacy preparations, the foregoing survey of initiatives is suggestive of what remains to be done. The general conclusion flowing from this survey is that “diplomatic preparation” is no longer a neglected concept as General Cook feared in 1999, but that it can indeed benefit from a more comprehensive, coherent, and systematic approach.

In a concluding attempt to conceptualize such an approach a notional matrix is offered below. Along its vertical axis in ascending order of the degree of pol-mil expertise required are the three constituencies of the USAF that participate in expeditionary diplomacy: (i) the largest constituency, composed of rank and file airmen who will deploy abroad during their careers; (ii) the expeditionary commanders at all command levels and for all unit types; and (iii) the area/regional specialists composing the Foreign Area Officer “corps.” The horizontal axis is the time line, divided into short-term, medium term, and long-term futures.

⁶⁴ The two component commands have used similar organizations for establishing an initial forward presence for a task force: the “Contingency Response Group” (CRG) in the case of USAFE, and the “Deployable Joint Task Force Augmentation Cell” (DJTFAC) in the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). For a discussion of the origins and operation of the first CRG, see Gen John P. Jumper, “Rapidly Deploying Aerospace Power: Lessons from Allied Force,” *Aerospace Power Journal*, Winter 1999, pp. 4-10.

It is not so much the detail as the concept of these two early-arriving teams that is instructive to this study. While stressing operations and logistics, these organizations also have political-diplomatic functions that may prove to be just as crucial to early success of a deployment. Lt Col Albert “Bull” Mitchum, then Political-Military Advisor to the USAFE Commander, was aboard the first helicopter of the 86th CRG in its initial deployment to Tirana, Albania in April 1999 during Operation ALLIED FORCE. The 86th on that occasion also included legal, protocol, psychological operations, and civil-military affairs personnel – in short, an expeditionary diplomacy package – along with its operational, logistical, and force protection elements. (Gen Jumper, “Rapidly Deploying Aerospace Power,” p. 6, and telephone interview of Lt Col Mitchum, USAF-ret, 16 March 2001.)

Table 1. Facilitating Expeditionary Diplomacy

(Current and Prospective Initiatives)

(iii) FAOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- LASI (p.13) -- ASAP (p.14) -- Convert 16Ps to 16Fs (footnote 44) -- Attract more applicants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Convert to 16Fs to <u>primary</u> AFSCs (p.15) -- Recruit "Scholarship Candidates" (p.15) -- Language School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Establish sufficient numbers -- Fill needed specialties -- Establish billets in key locations -- Fix personnel system -- Establish career patterns
(ii) Expeditionary Commanders (all levels, all unit types)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- USAFSOS (p.18) -- DCSC (p.20) -- EAF Online (p.9) -- CC Playbook (p.10) -- Component Cmd briefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- "Push-out" lessons learned system (p.10) -- PME Continuum of Education -- Developing Aerospace Leaders (DAL) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- FAOs on staff -- Multiple deployments -- PME Continuum of Education -- DAL (footnote 69)
(i) Rank and File Airmen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- USAFSOS -- EAF Online -- Component Cmd and Lead Wing briefings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- In-country experience -- Self-study -- CCAF -- Undergraduate degree programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- Multiple deployments -- Mentoring
<p>Hierarchical Constituencies (by degree of knowledge required)</p>			
<p>Time...</p> <p><i>Short Term Medium Term Long Term</i></p>			

The matrix is meant to be reflective of current initiatives as well as suggestive, not comprehensive, of what needs to be done – and in what context and sequence. The fundamental question remains of who should be in charge. Since building “expeditionary diplomats” is in its essence an education and training function – education at the FAO and commander levels, training at the rank and file level⁶⁵ – it would arguably make sense to put Commander, Air Education and Training Command (AETC) in charge.

Four-star horsepower would be indicative of the high priority attached to the enterprise. Existing AETC assets – schools and instructors and distance learning programs – could be leveraged to build both knowledgeable warriors and knowledgeable regionalists. Commander, Air University, has already designated among his current priorities the integration of AEF and regional studies into the “Continuum of Education”⁶⁶ that begins with the new Aerospace Basic Course and proceeds through Squadron Officer College, Air Command and Staff College, and Air War College levels. Putting AETC/CC – or an alternative four-star commander – in charge would not foreclose continued reliance on centers of current initiative such as the AEF Center and component commands like CENTAF.

SAF/IA would continue to manage and promote the FAO Program – hopefully with increased resources and a more productive partnership with the Air Force Personnel Center in matching qualified FAOs to appropriate billets. A plussed-up FAO cadre might, for example, usefully send regional specialists to two- or three-year school-house faculty tours to share their expertise with prospective commanders⁶⁷ and to “re-blue” the FAOs themselves by proximity to operators and other Air Force specialties.

A robust Foreign Area Officer Program with increased numbers, carefully recruited language and area specialties, strategically located billets, and attractive career incentives to keep FAOs on board for full careers is, in the view of this writer, the linchpin to long-term success in addressing the diplomatic imperatives of USAF expeditionary operations.

⁶⁵ Senior non-commissioned officers, as with most enterprises, will serve as crucial facilitators of both educational and training objectives.

⁶⁶ Lt Gen Lance W. Lord, Commander Air University, “Air University Shortbursts” command briefing dated 21 February 2001, AU/CC Priorities slide.

⁶⁷ FAOs in PME instructor billets could prove to be key players in the nascent “Developing Aerospace Leaders” (DAL) initiative of the Air Force Chief of Staff. For more on the DAL project and how it potentially relates to the challenge of producing more geostrategically astute expeditionary leaders, see James M. Smith, “Expeditionary Leaders, CINCs, and Chairmen: Shaping Air Force Officers for Leadership Roles in the Twenty-First Century,” *Aerospace Power Journal*, Winter 2000.

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